

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 SP-02 NSC-05 PM-03 L-01  
INR-05 CIAE-00 NSAE-00 DODE-00 HA-02 ICA-01 PA-01  
/043 W

-----094482 292130Z /64

R 291415Z JUN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3743  
INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 MOSCOW 15147

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-4  
TAGS: UR, US, PEPR, PINT, SHUM  
SUBJECT: ARBATOV AND BOGDANOV ON U.S.-SOVIET  
RELATIONS, SLEPAK AND SHCHARANSKIY

SUMMARY: APPEAL OF CONSCIENCE FOUNDATION (ACF)  
OFFICIALS RABBI SCHNEIER AND FATHER DAVIS DISCUSSED  
U.S.-SOVIET RELATIONS WITH USA INSTITUTE DIRECTOR  
ARBATOV AND DEPUTY DIRECTOR BOGDANOV FOR A TOTAL OF  
TWO AND ONE-HALF HOURS JUNE 23. EMBOFF COVERED THE  
SAME TOPIC IN A LENGTHY, INFORMAL DISCUSSION WITH  
BOGDANOV JUNE 27. NOTEWORTHY ASPECTS OF THESE  
CONVERSATIONS ARE HIGHLIGHTED BELOW. END SUMMARY.

1. ACF PRESIDENT RABBI ARTHUR SCHNEIER, ACCOMPANIED  
BY ACF VICE PRESIDENT FATHER THURSTON DAVIS, MET WITH  
USA INSTITUTE DEPUTY DIRECTOR BOGDANOV FOR ABOUT  
THIRTY MINUTES ON JUNE 23, AND THEN UNEXPECTEDLY  
WERE USHERED INTO INSTITUTE DIRECTOR ARBATOV'S  
OFFICE FOR A TWO-HOUR CONVERSATION WITH HIM. DURING  
A JUNE 26 COURTESY CALL ON THE AMBASSADOR, RABBI  
SCHNEIER RECALLED SEVERAL INTERESTING ASPECTS OF  
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THE CONVERSATION:  
--REGARDING GENERAL FOREIGN POLICY PROBLEMS,  
ARBATOV ARGUED THAT THE U.S. APPLIED A DOUBLE  
STANDARD, FEELING FREE TO SEND TROOPS TO VIETNAM  
AND TO GIVE MASSIVE MILITARY AID TO SUCH COUNTRIES  
AS IRAN AND SAUDI ARABIA YET STRONGLY CRITICIZING  
THE USSR FOR DOING ESSENTIALLY THE SAME IN OTHER

COUNTRIES;

--ARBATOV CLAIMED THAT BREZHNEV HAD SPENT THREE HOURS TRYING TO PERSUADE SOMALI PRESIDENT SAID BARRE NOT TO INVADE ETHIOPIA;

--ARBATOV SAID THAT "DETENTE WAS STILL THE DOMINANT MOOD" IN MOSCOW, AND DENIED THAT BASIC DIFFERENCES EXISTED BETWEEN HIM AND ZAMYATIN ON THIS SCORE, ALTHOUGH ZAMYATIN TENDED TO BE "MORE EMOTIONAL" (RABBI SCHNEIER HAD ASKED ABOUT ARBATOV'S RECENT APPEARANCE WITH ZAMYATIN ON TV, REPORTED SEPTTEL); ARBATOV ECHOED THE JUNE 17 PRAVDA EDITORIAL LINE ABOUT AN ANTI-SOVIET PLOT ON THE PART OF "ENEMIES OF DETENTE" IN THE U.S.;

--IN HIS SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH SCHNEIER AND DAVIS, BOGDANOV WAS LESS OPTIMISTIC, SAYING THAT "TIME WAS RUNNING OUT" ON DETENTE;

--DURING HIS CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, BOGDANOV TOOK THE LINE THAT BREZHNEV AND HIS DETENTE POLICY WERE VIRTUALLY UNCHALLENGED BY THE MILITARY OR OTHER "SOVIET INTEREST GROUPS," ALTHOUGH "MIDDLE LEVEL" SOVIET OFFICIALS WERE GENUINELY DISTURBED OVER THE POSSIBILITY OF AN ANTI-SOVIET ALLIANCE  
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BETWEEN THE U.S. AND CHINA ("YOU ASK ANY OF THEM," BOGDANOV SAID WITH APPARENT SINCERITY, "AND THEY WILL TELL YOU THAT THE CHINESE AND THE AMERICANS ARE TRYING TO ENCIRCLE US").

2. BOTH ARBATOV AND BOGDANOV SPOKE AT LENGTH ABOUT HUMAN RIGHTS MATTERS. ON THE GENERAL HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUE, ARBATOV REPORTEDLY SAID THAT "WHEN PUSHED TO THE WALL, THE SOVIET UNION HAD NO CHOICE BUT TO REACT STRONGLY" BECAUSE IT HAD TO SAVE FACE; HE CONTRASTED THE "CONFRONTATIONAL" APPROACH OF THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION WITH THE "MORE REALISTIC" APPROACH OF THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION. REGARDING SPECIFIC HUMAN RIGHTS CASES:

--IN RESPONSE TO RABBI SCHNEIER'S QUESTION ABOUT SLEPAK AND SHCHARANSKIY, ARBATOV WAS "HARSH" REGARDING SLEPAK, SAYING THAT HE AND OTHER DISSIDENTS HAD BEEN MISLED ABOUT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF U.S. SUPPORT;

--ARBATOV POINTEDLY REMARKED THAT SLEPAK'S

SENTENCE MIGHT HAVE BEEN LIGHTER, HAD "THE  
ATMOSPHERE" BEEN DIFFERENT;

--BOGDANOV SUBSEQUENTLY TOLD EMBOFF THAT A  
CABLE TO ARBATOV FROM SENATOR JAVITS AND OTHER  
PROMINENT CONGRESSMEN ON THE SLEPAK CASE HAD  
PROMPTED THE INSTITUTE TO LOOK INTO THE FACTS OF  
THE CASE; THE INSTITUTE HAD LEARNED, BOGDANOV  
CLAIMED, THAT SLEPAK HAD TRIED TO PUSH "A FIREMAN"  
OFF THE BALCONY OF THE SLEPAK APARTMENT, AND  
THAT MRS. SLEPAK POURED BOILING WATER ON PEOPLE  
STANDING BELOW THE BALCONY;

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 MOSCOW 15147  
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--ON SHCHARANSKIY, IN RESPONSE TO RABBI  
SCHNEIER'S PERSONAL SUGGESTION THAT SHCHARANSKIY  
BE EXPELLED FROM THE USSR, ARBATOV SAID SHCHARANSKIY  
"WOULD HAVE TO BE TRIED", AND WHAT HAPPENED AFTER  
THAT WOULD DEPEND LARGELY ON "THE ATMOSPHERE";  
EXPULSION OF SHCHARANSKIY WOULD AMOUNT TO REWARDING  
HIM FOR HIS "ILLEGAL" BEHAVIOR.

3. IN DISCUSSING OTHER BILATERAL PROBLEMS,  
ARBATOV TOLD RABBI SCHNEIER AND FATHER DAVIS THAT  
THE MARTHA PETERSON CASE WAS PUBLICIZED IN RESPONSE  
TO A U.S. "ESCALATION" IN THE HANDLING OF SUCH  
CASES. ARBATOV MENTIONED THE CRAWFORD CASE,  
CLAIMING THAT THE SOVIET SIDE HAD PLENTY OF  
DOCUMENTARY EVIDENCE IT COULD RELEASE ON OTHER  
SUCH CASES, BUT "WAS SHOWING RESTRAINT."

4. BOGDANOV GRATUITOUSLY RAISED WITH EMBOFF THE

SUBJECT OF EMBASSY CONTACTS WITH SOVIET DISSIDENTS,  
SAYING HE KNEW "FROM THE INSIDE" THAT THESE  
CONTACTS WERE NOT UNDERSTOOD BY SOVIET  
AUTHORITIES, WHO VIEWED THEM AS OFFICIAL  
USG SUPPORT FOR "THE OPPOSITION." WITH REFERENCE  
TO EMBOFF PERSONALLY, BOGDANOV SAID "UNFORTUNATELY"  
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EMBOFF'S CONTACTS WITH DISSIDENTS WOULD, IF  
CONTINUED, COMPLICATE ARRANGING WORTHWHILE OFFICIAL  
CONTACTS. BOGDANOV WOULD NOT BE DRAWN OUT FURTHER  
ON THIS MATTER.

5. COMMENT: ONE MESSAGE THAT ARBATOV APPARENTLY  
WANTED TO CONVEY IS THAT SOVIET AUTHORITIES HAVE  
OPTED TO BE RELATIVELY TOUGH ON SPECIFIC ISSUES  
OF CONCERN TO THE USG - -SLEPAK, SHCHARANSKIY,  
PETERSON, CRAWFORD--AND PROBABLY WILL CONTINUE  
TO DO SO IF "THE ATMOSPHERE" OF U.S.-SOVIET  
RELATIONS DOES NOT IMPROVE. THE IMPLICATION,  
OF COURSE, IS THAT ALL OF THE IMPROVING MUST  
COME FROM THE U.S. SIDE, SINCE THE U.S. IS FULLY  
TO BLAME FOR CURRENT PROBLEMS IN THE RELATIONSHIP.  
TOON

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## Message Attributes

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